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SB 1444 RELATING TO ROADSIDES

**Senate Committee on Transportation and Intergovernmental Affairs
Senate Committee on Labor and Environment**

**Public Hearing, February 6, 1999
9:30 a.m., Room 016, State Capitol**

By
John T. Harrison, Environmental Center
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center

SB 1444 would amend Chapter 264, HRS, to limit use of herbicides by state agencies in the maintenance of public roadways, and to establish a roadside vegetation committee to oversee the statewide transition to integrated vegetation management.

Our statement on this measure does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

This measure proposes more diverse roadside vegetation alternatives than does the previously considered legislation, including specific incentives for community participation. We applaud these initiatives, recognizing the value of community based stewardship as a powerful tool for environmental management. However, where highway safety is concerned, we feel that there should be provision for state or county oversight to address inadequacies that may develop in community maintenance programs.

The proposed roadside vegetation committee could provide an effective forum for continued progress in implementation of IVM statewide. However, as presently constituted, its membership is weighted heavily in the area of agency interests. While their perspectives are crucial, we are concerned that economic considerations may be given more weight than environmental issues.

We note that the state DOT already has instituted a program to implement provisions in lines 8-13 on page 2.